

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An automated gaming system comprising a gaming table, a mechanical card shuffling device associated with the gaming table, a card reader communicating read card information to at least one processor and an upright video display panel comprising:

a table having an upper surface, the upper surface having a video display surface that provides a video display at least two different player positions;

the at least one processor is in information communication with the upright video display panel and the video display surface, the processor or processors directing video display on both the upright video display panel and the video display surface, and providing game rules for ~~[[the]]~~ play of at least one casino table card game without the use of physical cards on the table;

wherein ~~[[a]]~~ the card reader establishes an electronic file of an order of a randomized set of cards and provides information from the electronic file that enables ~~[[the]]~~ a main game processor to provide virtual cards to players based upon the order of cards identified in the electronic file.

2. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein each player position has an individual player processing board dedicated to that position and the card reader is part of the mechanical card shuffling device.

3. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 2 wherein each individual player processing board communicates directly with a main game processor.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The automated gaming system of claim 2 wherein each individual player processing board communicates directly with a single dealer ~~[[Dealer]]~~ game engine processor.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The automated gaming system of claim 4 wherein the single dealer ~~[[Dealer]]~~ game engine processor communicates directly with the main game processor.

6. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein the processor is programmable to enable the play of more than one different casino table game wherein cards are used in the play of each of the games.
7. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein the video display surface is a continuous video display surface.
8. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 7 wherein continuous video display surface has changeable light filtering that can screen displayed images from various angles and the light filtering can be changed upon command by the processor.
9. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 7 wherein the light filtering can be changed upon external command.
10. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein player input is provided at least in part by controls in the video display surface.
11. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 10 wherein the controls comprise touch screen controls.
12. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 10 wherein the controls comprise a panel embedded into the video display surface.
13. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 10 wherein additional player input can be provided from player input provided on a surface below the video display surface and facing a position where players are to be seated.
14. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 11 wherein additional player input can be provided from player input provided on a surface below the video display surface and facing a position where players are to be seated.

15. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 12 wherein additional player input can be provided from player input provided on a surface below the video display surface and facing a position where players are to be seated.

16. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 2 wherein communication between the at least one processor and the individual player processor is performed through a transaction-based protocol.

17. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 16 wherein either the at least one processor or the individual player processor can start a transaction.

18. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 4 wherein communication between the at least one processor and the individual player processor is performed through a transaction-based protocol.

19. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 18 wherein either the at least one processor or the individual player processor can start a transaction.

20. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 10 wherein each player position has an intelligent individual player processing board dedicated to that position and communication between the at least one processor and the individual player processor is performed through a transaction-based protocol.

21. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 20 wherein either the at least one processor or the individual player processor can start a transaction.

22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein the mechanical card shuffling device comprises a device for forming a random set of playing cards comprising:

a top surface and a bottom surface of said device;

a single card receiving area for receiving an initial set of playing cards;
a randomizing system for randomizing ~~[[the]]~~ an order of an initial set of playing cards;
a collection surface in a card collection area for receiving randomized playing cards one at a time into the card collection area, the collection surface receiving cards so that all cards are received below the top surface of the device;
an image capture device that reads the rank and suit of each card before being received on the card collection surface;
an elevator for raising the collection surface so that at least some randomized cards are elevated at least to the top surface of the device; and
a moveable cover over the elevator.

23. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 22 wherein the elevator raises all randomized cards above the top surface of the device and the moveable cover is automatically raised to allow the randomized cards to rise above the top surface of the device.

24. (ORIGINAL) The automated gaming system of claim 22 wherein at least one pick-off roller removes cards one at a time from the card receiving area and moves cards one at a time towards the randomizing system and the image capture device can read a card only after it has been moved by the at least one pick-off roller.

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The device of claim 22 wherein at least one microprocessor is present in the device and the at least one microprocessor controls vertical movement of the ~~[[card]]~~ collection surface and camera triggering.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The device of claim 22 wherein at least a second sensor identifies a ~~[[the]]~~ position of the ~~[[card]]~~ collection surface so as to place a top card in the collection area at a position that is level with or above a ~~[[the]]~~ bottom of at least one card gripping element that is movable from at least one side of the collection area towards playing cards within the card collection area.

27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The device of claim 24 wherein the microprocessor is programmed to determine a distance that the ~~[[card]]~~ collection surface must be vertically moved to position at least one specific card at a bottom edge of ~~[[the]]~~ at least one card gripping element when the card gripping element moves to contact cards within the card collection area.

28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein the card shuffling device comprises a device for forming a random set of playing cards comprising:

- a top surface and a bottom surface of said device;

- a receiving area for an initial set of playing cards;

- a randomizing system for randomizing initial set of playing cards;

- a collection surface in a card collection area for receiving randomized playing cards;

- an elevator for raising the collection surface within the card collection area;

- at least one card supporting element within the card collection area that will support a predetermined number of cards within the card collection area; and

- an image capture system that can read at least a ~~[[the]]~~ rank of each at least one card before it is inserted into a set of cards at a position below the predetermined number of cards.

29. (ORIGINAL) The system of claim 28 wherein an at least one card supporting element comprises an element on at least one side of the card collection area that can move inwardly within the card collection area to contact and support the predetermined number of cards within the card collection area.

30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system of claim 28 wherein a microprocessor is communicatively connected to the device and the microprocessor is programmed to determine a distance that the ~~[[card]]~~ collection surface must be vertically moved to position at least one specific card position other than a ~~[[the]]~~ top card at a bottom edge of the at least one card supporting element when the card supporting element moves to contact cards within the card collection area.

31. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein the mechanical card shuffling device comprises a device for forming a random set of playing cards comprising:

- a top surface and a bottom surface of said device;
- a single card receiving area for receiving an initial set of playing cards;
- a randomizing system for randomizing the order of an initial set of playing cards;
- a collection surface in a card collection area for receiving randomized playing cards one at a time into the card collection area, the collection surface receiving cards so that all cards are received below the top surface of the device;
- an image capture device that reads a ~~[[the]]~~ rank and suit of each card after it has begun leaving the single card receiving area and before being received on the card collection surface;
- an elevator for raising the collection surface so that at least some randomized cards are elevated at least to the top surface of the device; and
- a moveable cover over the elevator.

32. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The automated gaming system of claim 1 wherein the mechanical card shuffling device comprises an automatic card shuffling device comprising:

- a microprocessor with memory for controlling the operation of the device;
- an in-feed compartment for receiving cards to be randomized;
- a card moving mechanism for moving cards individually from the in-feed compartment into a card mixing compartment where at least one set of cards are formed;
- an image capture system that can identify at least the rank of each card as it is moved towards, into or through the card mixing compartment, but before removal from the device;
- ~~[[a]]~~ the card mixing compartment that identifies a position for each card in each set of cards formed in the card mixing compartment,
- a memory that records at least a ~~[[the]]~~ rank of each card in each set of cards formed in the card mixing compartment; wherein the card mixing compartment comprises a plurality of substantially vertical supports, an opening for the passage of cards from the in-feed compartment, a moveable lower support surface; at least one stationary gripping element, a lower edge proximate the opening, the gripping ~~[[arm]]~~ element capable of suspending cards above the opening; and

an elevator for raising and lowering the moveable support surface.